

BL

2727

.H4

INGERSOLL AND THE DEIST

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

Chap. BL 2727 Copyright No. ....

Shelf 174

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.









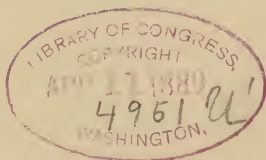
# INGERSOLL AND THE DEIST

BY

A NATIVE "TAR HEEL"

*N. B. Herring.*

*17*  
*1732<sup>a</sup>*



1889

FOR SALE BY

DOANE HERRING

WILSON, N. C.

*co*

BL2727  
.H4

COPYRIGHT, 1889,  
By N. B. HERRING.

Press of J. J. Little & Co.,  
Astor Place, New York.



TO  
THAT VILIFIED AND LITTLE UNDERSTOOD CLASS,

THE SKEPTICS;

AND TO THE HONEST AND TRUTH-LOVING  
TEACHERS OF RELIGION,

"PURE AND UNDEFILED BEFORE GOD,"

THIS LITTLE

BROCHURE

IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED

BY THE AUTHOR.



## PREFACE

---

IN a recent sermon the Minister said: "The reason assaults upon the Christian religion by Mr. Robert Ingersoll have attracted wide attention is more on account of the able Christian scholars to whom he professes to reply than to anything new in his attack."

Mr. Ingersoll says: "In the discussion of these questions I have nothing to do with the reputation of my opponent. His character throws no light on the subject, and is to me a matter of perfect indifference."

If the Minister is right, I fear that I shall have to take my labor for my pains; but if Mr. Ingersoll meant what he said in his reply to Mr. Black, he will not refuse to acknowledge my arguments because I am unknown.

To deny a fact, shows ignorance. To accept an error because it is plausible, shows a want of investigation or a reprehensible credulity. Instead of simply telling him that his statements are false, I have endeavored to show to him and to the average mind where and how they are false.

Instead of calling him "blasphemous" and

"scurrilous," I have attempted to show, by his own acknowledged standard (reason), that Mr. Black was not altogether wrong when he said, "The author" (Colonel Ingersoll) "holds *himself* to be the ultimate judge of all good and evil; what he approves is right, and what he dislikes is certainly wrong."

I have no quarrel with infidelity, neither am I at cross-purposes with Christianity.

Error, wherever found, be it in temple or shrine, high place or low, in philosophy or law, in teacher or taught, in preacher or infidel—error is my enemy, and I am the enemy of error.

To combat your enemy successfully, your first duty is to recognize him, and your next is to use efficient weapons against him. The weapons against error are neither blows nor curses, persuasions nor prayers.

With truth to start with, and logic to guide you, the pitfalls of error can never entrap you; but you must be sure of your guide as well as your companion.

# INGERSOLL AND THE DEIST.

---

## CHAPTER I.

### THE OLD MAN IN THE CAR.

AN old man sat in one of the gorgeous palace-cars of a great Western railway while the train sped along with such an easy gliding motion as not to disturb the old man in his reading.

He was the only passenger in the car, and, his journey being a long and tedious one, he had provided against the *ennui* and monotony of travel by supplying himself with some of the current literature of the day.

He was sociable in his nature and habits, and preferred the society of his fellow-man to any other enjoyment, but when alone and comfortable he never failed to have at hand some book or periodical from which he received instruction, or whiled away the time between his more active engagements.

His hair was short cropped and white with age. His face was wrinkled and his back bowed, but his

eye was bright and his broad forehead indicated thought. His dress was plain but neat, and his spectacles pushed up on his forehead showed that he did not need them in reading. He had been near-sighted in youth, and wore glasses mainly to see at a distance. Age had flattened his eyeballs, and the focus of light had come in the easy range of ordinary men in their prime. He wore glasses now more from habit than from any benefit he derived from them. He had been a student from early youth, and the acquisition of knowledge had been the one absorbing passion of his life. He had had the benefit of the finest educational facilities of his day, and had graduated with first honors at a famous university of the South. He began at an early day to critically examine his own knowledge, and, finding much of it faulty, he inquired into the methods of teaching, and to his surprise and chagrin he found them crude, inefficient, and ill adapted to the requirements of the age.

His *Alma Mater*, which at one time he worshiped as a tutelary goddess, became in later years a fetich of priggism where the smatterer bowed and the pedant strove for the honors of a Machiavelian sophistry.

In every department of human learning which he investigated, he found the same superficiality, the same gloss and tinsel. The science and art of agriculture were in the most primitive condition,

and the laws which governed the growth of plants understood by few. Main strength and awkwardness were considered the most efficient means at the command of the farmer, while crop failures were attributed to evil conjunction of the planets. Removing obstructions such as stones and stumps, subsoiling and under-draining, and the intelligent application of fertilizers were regarded as evidences of lunacy, and to be called a "book farmer" was equivalent in these days to being called a "crank."

The physician's greatest ambition was to "smell like a doctor," and his armamentarium consisted in murdered technicalities of which he knew no more than his deluded patrons.

"Collozion" of the liver was a diagnosis often pronounced at the bed-side, and cynanche trachealis or cerebro-spinal meningitis, uttered in the style of "Sir Oracle," gave him the name of being a very knowing doctor.

The lawyer would speak knowingly of the *Lex talionis*, while the preacher quoted Scripture and twisted it to suit his own church and creed.

Some of the best mechanics had spent much of their time in working at perpetual motion, and the alchemist's dream still haunted the chemist, while the philosopher's stone engrossed the attention of nearly every class above the common laborer. But, of all men, the teacher was found



most sadly wanting in useful information ; and so deeply grounded was his prejudice, and so bent upon following the ruts of his predecessors, that the caustic lines of Boileau became a fitting animadversion upon the farcical purism of the average school-master :

“ Brim full of learning, see the pedant stride !  
Bristling with horrid Greek, and puffed with pride,  
A thousand authors he in vain has read,  
And with their maxims stuffed his empty head ;  
And thinks that without Aristotle’s rule  
Reason is blind, and common sense a fool.”



## CHAPTER II.

### THE SCHOOL-MASTER.

TO be a school-teacher in the South prior to the war, and more especially about the date 1840, was looked upon as an admission on the part of the teacher that he was good for little else.

A few noted exceptions might be found here and there, where by long and persistent use of the rod a sort of savage respect had attached itself to particular individuals; but as a rule, when the Southern gentleman wanted a teacher, he sent to Massachusetts or Connecticut, as he did for his ax-helves, believing that no good could come out of this modern Nazareth save a cotton-bale, a nigger, or a mule.

This fantasm of the Southern mind had built a temple of wisdom in New England, and, as true knowledge could be obtained from no other source, the Yankee school-master came periodically to keep the free and entered schools of the South.

Ichabod Crane, the hero of "Sleepy Hollow," is a type of the New England gaberlunzies who migrated annually to North Carolina to instruct

the young "tar heel" in the mysteries of foreign slang.

"I kotch it," I have heard one say as he played ball with the children when school was out.

They brought with them an abundance of Le-thean waters, of which the tow-headed urchins drank copious draughts; and hence "your Epimenides, your somnolent *Peter Klaus*, since named Rip Van Winkle."

Notwithstanding the unsavory atmosphere in which the native teacher was compelled to live, this old gentleman decided in early manhood to devote his life-work to the instruction of others. With an honesty unknown to the other professions he pursued the line of truth as far as he could trace it, without thanks and with little reward. He passed through the usual stages of hopeful optimism, despairing pessimism, indifferent submission, and finally in his old age entered the Elysian fields of true philosophy. At middle age he had learned a lesson which few ever learn, that is, the limit of his own capacity. After that he never attempted impossibilities. He saw that the possible was so much neglected that life was too short to waste time after the impossible. He had learned that the human mind could never attain to the limits of all knowledge, and for years he had only endeavored to instill into the minds of his pupils some of the fundamental

principles. He made it a rule of his profession to correct error rather than to teach truth, believing that negative evidence in this particular—that is, a statement of what a thing is not—is more valuable than dogmatic assertion. The modern method of pushing at school, of going through and over books, of cramming, learning rules by heart, and reciting by rote, he repudiated as a waste of time and an injury to the understanding.

As a man, he was somewhat on the order of Rousseau's friend De Altuna.

“The idea of vengeance could no more enter his head than the desire of it could proceed from his heart. His mind was too great to be vindictive, and I have frequently heard him say, with the greatest coolness, that no mortal could offend him. He was the only man I ever saw whose principles were not intolerant. It was not of the least consequence to him whether his friend was a Jew, a Protestant, a Turk, a bigot, or an atheist, provided he was an honest man.”

Heteroclit, *bizarre, sui generis*, or some such appellative, appeared to befit him both as a teacher and a citizen, and accordingly he was known in his community as an oddity.

His pupils gave him the name of Rip Van Winkle, partly in honor of his native State, but mainly on account of his ancient methods and his tameless desire to attend to their business rather

than his own. He claimed, however, that their business was his, and in attending to them he only exemplified his consistent precept of "mind your own business."

The little boys looked upon this as a paradox, but the more mature minds could see the consistency, as the true philosopher can see the consistency of cause and effect linked with necessity.

## CHAPTER III.

### RIP VAN WINKLE.

VAN WINKLE, Rip Van Winkle, or Old Rip, as we shall hereafter indiscriminately call him, taught by precept and example, and while he had for years endeavored to instill into the minds of his pupils the fundamental principles of all knowledge, he had watched the teachings of others, not only in the school-room, but from the pulpit, the rostrum, and the secular press.

Speculative philosophy had for many years engaged his leisure moments, and he had studied with a critical eye the various theories of philosopher, minister, and statesman. He had found from experience and observation that truth lay buried in the inner kernel of all things, and could only be found by dissection and analysis, that the pericarps or husks of philosophy alone were seen by the multitude, and that to get the pure gold the mine must be sapped to the bottom.

He analyzed the human mind, and divided it into compartments embracing truth and error. He compared the psychical states of men and brutes, and found them so closely allied as to bear

the semblance of kinship, yet so far apart that no theory of descent has been able to bridge the gap.

The marvelous intellect of Darwin, the keen logic of Spencer, the profound thought of Helmholtz, and the painstaking studies of Haeckel, have never yet discovered the "missing link" in the chain of cause and effect which shall attempt to bind man to a common origin with the brute.

Evolution in its broad sense he admitted, as every true philosopher is compelled to admit; but the theory of man's descent he found to be based upon pure assumption, as all theories concerning God, the universe, and the devil are based upon assumed postulates. In his philosophy he assumed nothing, but, taking facts as they are presented to the minds of all thinkers, he reasoned out a philosophy of his own, a creed, as it were, in which he could find no fact in the universe running counter to his theories.

He made a circle around every living creature, and called it the "circle of the finite." Beyond this circle lay the infinite, and into this infinity he found that man was ever prying, ever trying to project himself.

The lower animals, so far as he could see, had their whole existence here. Their distinctive faculty, as well as the common faculties of man and brute, remained satisfied in this circumscribed area, never pushing the brute to a hope beyond,



nor dragging him with a fear of the far-off and unsettled future. Man alone he found delving into the mysteries of the infinite, yet never satisfied because of his fears and doubts. He sought for a reason why man should trouble himself for that which appeared to be so far beyond his grasp, and in settling this point he compared by analysis the human and brute mind, noting particularly the distinctive characteristics of each. The senses, the physical appetites, and the passions he found common to both, with the balance in favor of the brute as regards development. Sight, hearing, and smelling, especially, he found to be more acute in many of the lower animals.

The distinctive faculty called instinct—a free gift to the brute, as reason is a free gift to man—unerring as a guide, incapable of improvement, perfect, and of which man can have no conception—a faculty which appears to be a substitute for reason, so closely allied yet so far apart from reason that it sets a barrier between man and beast which no theory of materialism can overthrow.

From this faculty of instinct he found no dependencies; therefore the brute is without hope, without charity, without faith. Reverence, veneration, knowledge of good and evil, civilization, progress, religion, belong to man alone. Instinct enables the honey-bee to make its comb, the horse

to find its way home through the mazes and intricacies of a virgin forest, the beaver to make its dam, and the carrier-pigeon to direct its flight ; but instinct never profits by experience, never teaches one generation how to avoid the mistakes of a preceding one, never educates youth nor protects age. Circumscribed, limited to the finite, bound with a Promethean chain to this stony pen, it has no means of extending itself beyond the circle. Infinity is a realm of which it has no conception, and the spirit of the beast must end with the physical forces which bring it into existence.

How different with men ! “ Indued with intellectual sense and souls,” they stand out, reach out, grasp all, and long for more.

The circle of the finite cannot contain the mind of man.

Reason, with its dependencies, enables him to traverse the infinite, to project himself beyond the pale of the known into regions where truth, error, happiness, and misery reign supreme, where time and space have no beginning and no ending, where mutation ceases, and where reform is impossible ; for it is written, “ He that is unjust, let him be unjust still ; and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still ; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still ; and he that is holy, let him be holy still.”



## CHAPTER IV.

### THE PHILOSOPHER.

ENTHRONED upon the highest pinnacle of the infinite sits Reason, crowned with the tiara of Justice, clad in the purple robes of Faith, Hope, and Charity, having for its foot-stool Reverence, Veneration, Conscience, Worship, Superstition, and Fear.

Upon this couch Religion was born, and at this altar it bends its knee. It is pure and God-like as it approaches the crown, low and groveling as it descends to the foot. Without reason the dependent faculties could not exist ; without these faculties, religion would be impossible. With reason alone, man would be simply an intellectual machine, wound up by the hand of Time, to run its course without pleasure, without pain, without hope or fear ; stoical, never in error, never in doubt, doing no good, doing no harm—progressing for ever in the line of truth—simply to know, to know until he knew it all, and then what ? Ask the Pantheist.

To be a man then and a religionist requires a combination of intellect and its dependent facul-

ties, but, astounding as the fact may be, it is nevertheless a fact that religion has ignored its fountain-head, and seeks to maintain its existence by feeding on its inferior and dependent sources.

This it is which enables infidelity to flaunt its florid rhetoric before the dazzled gaze of ignorance. This it is that shames the honest seeker after truth, and causes his ears to tingle, and his cheek to burn at the irreverent propagandism he hears in the pulpit. This it is which forces the philosopher back upon his own resources, and causes him to ignore the teachings of priest and infidel alike.

As the prime object of all teaching is to influence conduct, to give lessons through any medium whereby the individual may be influenced to act to his own detriment can never come within the pale of true education, and as such should not be encouraged.

To get at the truth of any matter, we have but one unerring guide. The senses are proverbially delusive, human desires are but a mockery, and that ever-paraded monitor, conscience, sways the human heart to and fro upon the billows of life without rudder or ballast, driving one in this direction, another in that, approving in one what it condemns in another, and blinding all with the beautiful phantasmagoria of self-approval. Were it left to the senses, the world would still be

flat, and the imagination would place it back upon the coil of a serpent.

“There is a way which seemeth right unto a man ; but the ends thereof are the ways of death.”

Our desires are still less to be trusted. We live under the influence of so many artificial stimuli that those instincts which to the brute are unerring guides, become in man *ignes fatui*, leading us in devious paths, and often stranding us in the mud.

That divine gift which alone separates man from the brute, and through which all the grand achievements of the world have been accomplished ; that which enables him to think on abstract subjects and profit by experience ; that which is the only image of God in man—reason, and reason alone, is the guide to truth.

If man is ever to be judged by appearances, and have sentence passed upon him through the medium of sense, his case will remain hopeless ; but when enlightened philosophy shall formulate a creed in accordance with the highest attributes of humanity, the veil of charity will then cover up the ugly places in man's nature, and fit him for the exercise of that love which is so much spoken of and so little realized.

As well might we attempt to get at the chemical composition and therapeutic effect of a sugar-coated pill by looking at it, as to analyze the

hidden springs of human nature by looking at man. His composition is so intricate, his make-up so elaborate, and his attributes so varied, that anatomists, physiologists, and psychologists, with all their studies of body, function, and soul, have failed to satisfy even themselves on the points of their most painstaking labor.

This unsatisfactory result may be traced to two essential errors: one, of the manner in which the investigation is made; the other, in the means used to make it. The mathematician in working out a problem starts with the premises and labors to the end with one instrument. Hopes, fears, preconceived opinions, and appearances do not enter into the contest. Reason alone battles with the difficulty, and, if the result comes out unsatisfactorily, he does not abandon his means, but reviews his work with the same and detects his error; or, if there is no error, acquiesces in the result without quibbling for an answer that he thought, or expected, or had been told would be the proper one. So in the mechanic arts, so in law and medicine; then why not in the more refined and subtile philosophy of metaphysics? Why trust and appeal to the intellect in all matters pertaining to material benefits, and so unceremoniously thrust it aside as untrustworthy when it comes to study ethical and psychological law? Is there nothing real in all these wordy abstrac-

tions which harass and perplex without satisfying, or does the fault lie in the method of study and the ends to be gained? Have we any criterion of truth that we should follow automatically as the shadow follows the substance? This was claimed for a thousand years during the Dark Ages, and the world lay dormant. Truth was claimed to have a visible throne in the Church, and the history of those times is a long history of crime. This criterion is now centered in the thinking capacity of every rational creature, and when a man lays aside his reason he denies God. The truth can be arrived at just as an eclipse of the sun can be arrived at, but you must work the problem out the same as the astronomer works out the eclipse.

The intellectual world is tired and sick of dogmatic teaching.

"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good," and "be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you."



## CHAPTER V.

### FAITH.

FOR the finite to grasp the infinite would be to make a part equal to the whole ; yet the finite, by the terms of its own existence, and with the aid of the evidence at its command, can in a manner arrive at conclusions which are positive.

Positive evidence, or the evidence of our senses, will compel every one to admit that time is without limit either in the past or future, that space is boundless in every direction. No man has experience when there was no time, neither has he come to the limit of space. Evidence by denial, exclusion, or exception, twist it as you may, can never exclude either the one or the other, nor bring them within the scope of the finite.

Synthetic reasoning, from whatever point you start, can only carry you to the circumference of the circle.

At the boundary line of the finite, reason must stop, because evidence becomes inoperative. Here another faculty assumes control, and, having its impulse from positive data, can never vary from the direction it takes.

Faith is the only means by which the finite can extend itself into the infinite.

Beyond the limits of the finite it is influenced no more by finite things. With its impulse from truth, its direction is for ever in the line of truth ; but with its momentum from error, its progress tends to error *ad infinitum*.

In the philosophy of Materialism faith is a condemned faculty. It is regarded as the offspring of ignorance and superstition alone. Denial of facts and assumption of truths are the bane of all systems of philosophy. The contention is for what we want rather than for what we have.

Faith being one of the dependencies of reason, and being influenced and modified by the other dependent faculties, becomes a guide or a snare, according to the influence exerted by one or all of its fellow dependents.

Faith, the product of pure reason, is simply an extension of reason beyond the finite into the infinite. Faith, the product of the subordinate faculties, is only an extension of those faculties into the infinite. Now, as truth within the circle of the finite is only attainable through reason, to find truth in the realm of infinity, we must exercise that faith which is based upon reason alone. Faith, based upon the subordinate faculties, is always liable to be erroneous, because these faculties contradict one another, and because they form

“in the brain, that wondrous world with one inhabitant, recesses dim and dark, treacherous sands and dangerous shores, where seeming sirens tempt and fade ; streams that rise in unknown lands from hidden springs, strange seas with ebb and flow of tides, resistless billows urged by storms of flame, profound and awful depths hidden by mist of dreams, obscure and phantom realms where vague and fearful things are half revealed, jungles where passions’ tigers crouch, and skies of cloud and blue where fancies fly with painted wings that dazzle and mislead ; and the poor sovereign of this pictured world is led by old desires and ancient hates, and stained by crimes of many vanished years, and pushed by hands that long ago were dust, until he feels like some bewildered slave that Mockery has throned and crowned.” \*

\* Ingersoll’s “ Reply to Gladstone.”



## CHAPTER VI.

### DIALECTICS.

“AND the poor sovereign” (Reason) “of this pictured world is led by old desires and ancient hates, and stained by crimes of many vanished years, and pushed by hands that long ago were dust, until he feels like some bewildered slave that Mockery has throned and crowned.”

Rhetoric! Beautiful, high-sounding, turgid rhetoric! Weapons of the evangelist—of the revivalist.

Shall the philosopher imitate the priest? Shall Reason abdicate her throne at the behest of a phrasemonger?

“The intellect is not always supreme. It is surrounded by clouds. It sometimes sits in darkness. It is often misled—sometimes in superstitious fear, it abdicates. It is not always a white light. The passions and prejudices are prismatic—they color thoughts. Desires betray the judgment and cunningly mislead the will.” \*

Were these powers taken into the council that projected the Mont Cenis tunnel? Are they

\* Ingersoll's “Reply to Gladstone.”

invited on shipboard in a storm at sea? Did they help Lieutenant Maury to construct his navigation charts? Did Columbus invoke their aid when he set out on his voyage of discovery?

It is a "poor sovereign," indeed, that takes these fearful helpers into his cabinet of state. Torquemada and Bonaparte chose them for boon companions and bed-fellows. The mathematician utterly ignores them, the astronomer does not recognize them, and the philosopher should say to them, "Get thee behind me, Satan."

The passions are the common property of man and brute. What makes the man is his power to think on abstract subjects. This power to think is independent of the physical senses or the passions.

The senses cannot help the mind to think. The passions, when they intrude, always do harm. The mind often becomes more acute and active when one or more of the senses are destroyed. A celebrated blind teacher of anatomy in New York is an example. The deaf, dumb, and blind asylums prove the same thing. Bonaparte's character and career show what intellect will do, aided by all the passions. The character of Lord Bacon is another example.

Does anybody suppose that Euclid cared about the "obscure and phantom realms where vague and fearful things are half revealed, jungles where

passions' tigers crouch, and skies of cloud and blue where fancies fly with painted wings that dazzle and mislead " ? Was he misled by this unexplored and tangled mass of disarray ? Did fear, hope, despair, hatred, or love aid him in the solution of his celebrated forty-seventh problem ?

To what use could the mathematician put conscience ? What can the surgeon do with prayer ? How far would any or all of the passions direct the engineer, the navigator, or the statesman ? Does not the downfall of empires show what irrational legislation can do for men ?

Faith, directed by reason, brought Columbus to the Western Hemisphere. Faith, directed by conscience, caused Paul to persecute the early Christians. Faith, directed by reason, enabled Eads to channel the mouth of the Mississippi river. Faith, directed by worship, prayer, and superstition, caused Paulina to lose her virtue in the Temple of Isis.\* Faith, directed by reason, makes agriculture possible ; gives impulse to commerce, navigation, and education ; builds cities, wharves, steamboats, and railroads ; makes progress, civilization, and contentment possible. Faith, directed by the passions, causes internecine wars, religious persecutions, and *autos-da-fe*.

" The experience of many ages proves that men may be ready to fight to the death, and to

\* Josephus.

persecute without pity, for a religion whose creed they do not understand, and whose precepts they habitually disobey." \* *Blind faith.*

Shall a man doff his reason the moment he puts on the garb of religion? Is it possible that God's physical laws are based upon reason, and his spiritual laws upon the subsidiaries to reason? Is revelation a thought of God? If so, how can revelation be above reason? Can the triangle contain more than two right angles in the mind of God? Is reason the image of God in man? If so, God's reason and man's reason are alike.

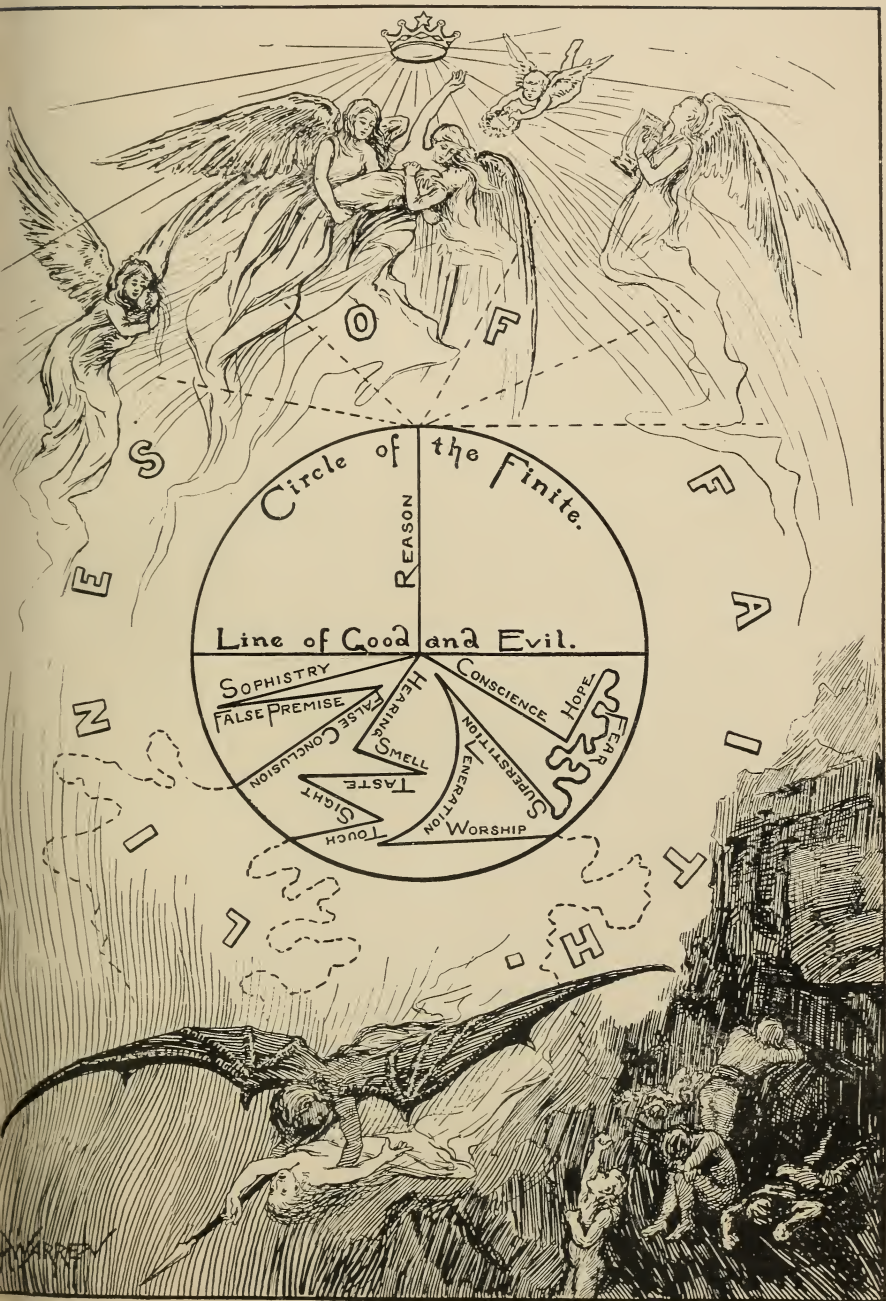
Such were the philosophical conclusions of this modern Rip Van Winkle, this gray-headed pedagogue from North Carolina, as he sat in the car reading the *North American Review*.

\* Macaulay.



## CHAPTER VII.

THE SUBJECT ILLUSTRATED.





## CHAPTER VIII.

### EVIDENCE.

RIP VAN WINKLE was somewhat startled by a long, shrill screech of the locomotive whistle, and a rather sudden slowing up of the train as it approached a station; but, as his attention was deeply engrossed upon the subject he was reading, he hardly knew the train had stopped until another passenger entered the car and caused him to look up from his book.

The new passenger was a portly gentleman, rather above the middle age, with a beaming, kindly, rather full countenance, and a pleasant greeting on his lip, as he took a seat next our old friend and remarked: "I am glad to find that I am not entirely alone in the car, as I always prefer company to solitude, and especially after a hearty breakfast."

Without laying down his book, Old Rip adjusted his glasses and returned the congratulations of his new acquaintance with a smile and a pleasant word, to let him know that his presence was welcome; and with some emotion he directed the conversation at once to his book by saying, "I have just

read a most astounding assertion, and as the author is a lawyer, and supposed to be well versed in matters of evidence, it appears all the more strange as coming from such a source."

This at once opened the way for what is to follow in these pages; and the new-comer, glancing at the book, saw it was the *North American Review*, and his eyes danced with a merry twinkle as he looked at the page and read, "A Reply to the Rev. Henry M. Field, D.D."

"May I ask what the assertion is that appears to be so astounding?"

Van Winkle opened the book and read this sentence :

"In the nature of things, there can be no evidence of the existence of an infinite being."\*

Our new passenger was in a good humor. He was pleased with all the world and himself too. He understood the practical details of life to the extent of being able to provide well for self, and he believed in living. He was now on a lecturing tour, and the night before he had delivered a lecture on the "Mistakes of Moses." His receipts had been large and he had been cheered to the echo. He felt a kind of pity and contempt for mankind in general, but at the same time his nature was kindly, and he would relieve a present distress. He was well up with the religious controversies

\* "A Reply to the Rev. Henry M. Field," page 483.



of the day, and he took a cynical delight in mystifying preachers and theologians by asking questions, and enjoyed their chagrin when they found themselves hopelessly entangled in the meshes of their contradictory assertions.

Controversy was his delight, but angry debate he abhorred. He was apparently fair, and his sophisms were so plausible that he was regarded as a complete advocate.

He looked at the withered old man by his side, and asked in a compassionate sort of way, "What is the matter with that assertion?"

"What is the matter! It would be well to define evidence, or to decide what evidence is," replied Rip, "before committing one's self to such a sweeping assertion."

"Will you please to give me your idea of what may be termed evidence?"

"Evidence to my mind may be reckoned under three forms,—that of positive, negative, and rationalistic."

"What do I understand you to mean by positive evidence?"

"Positive evidence is that form of testimony which is alone deducible from the physical senses."

"Do you mean by the physical senses, sight, hearing, taste, touch, and smelling?"

"Yes."

"And how much value do you apply to this form of testimony?"

"Just so much as may be included in the word 'doubtful.'"

"Would you consider the testimony doubtful if a witness was to say he saw an act committed?"

"Most assuredly."

"But suppose he should say he saw the act committed and heard the voice of the actor?"

"In that case the testimony would be stronger, but still doubtful."

"And suppose he was to say that he saw the act, heard the voice, and touched the actor?"

"Doubtful still."

"Now, suppose the act to have been the stealing of oranges from a grocery store, and the grocer was to testify that he saw the thief, heard his voice, touched, smelled, and tasted the stolen fruit,—how would you value that evidence?"

Rip Van Winkle closed his book, took off his spectacles, placed them in the case, and looking at his companion as he would at a pupil in making a demonstration, replied in these words:

"To make a positive assertion in regard to anything or any occurrence, you must either see, hear, taste, smell, or touch the object of which your assertion is the subject.

"The probability of error in this mode of coming to conclusions is so great that the testimony

at all times is made doubtful. Our earliest life is made up of sense impressions only, and, to correct the defects of one another, all the senses must be compared before they can give just information ; and, notwithstanding the experience of a lifetime, the eye will continue to deceive, subjective noises in the ear will distract, and the sense of smell is often perverted by a disagreeable sight or an unpleasant sound.

“Taste and touch, also, are subject to similar perversions, and require the most watchful care to prevent error, and we never live long enough to get entirely rid of the delusions.

“The clinical thermometer is a tacit admission on the part of every physician in the land that the tactile sense of the most delicate fingers can only approximate the truth as to temperature ; the mirage of the desert is a plague-spot to the weary traveler ; and the tricks of the juggler become a divine alchemy to the uninformed.”

At this speech, the stout gentleman took off his look of pity, and eyed the octogenarian with surprise. From a simple desire to while away a passing moment, he had become interested, and urged the old man to express his views on the other forms of evidence, which he did as follows :

“Negative evidence is a minus quantity in relation to the perceptive powers—a sort of unofficial affirmation or assent of the mind.

Rationalistic evidence, as you well know, is the deduction of pure reason from admitted premises.

“Negative evidence may be taken in a description or definition by denial, exclusion, or exception—a statement of what a thing is not. Like the positive, it becomes useful in many of the factitious ordinances of life, and may become auxiliary to pure reason in seeking an unknown quantity. But, in a problem where you are limited to the synthetical mode of reasoning, little evidence can be admitted save the rationalistic.”

## CHAPTER IX.

### THE "ASSERTION" ANALYZED.

THE two travelers had become very good friends in this time, and the stout gentleman turning to his companion inquired if he thought that, by any one or all three of the modes of evidence discussed in the preceding chapter, it could be demonstrated that Colonel Ingersoll's assertion in regard to the existence of an infinite being might be false?

"To demonstrate the absolute falsity of the assertion," replied the school-master, "and to the entire satisfaction of all thinking minds, might be a task of great difficulty, but to place the balance of evidence *against* the assertion, I not only think feasible, but of easy performance."

"And, pray, what evidence is there to place against the assertion?"

"There is a great deal of negative, much positive, and some rationalistic evidence, which, if you will exercise a degree of patience, I will endeavor to present as briefly as possible;" and, continuing, the old man said:

"All truths move in parallel lines. They never



cross, never clash, never run counter to one another.

"The axioms of Euclid stand in perfect harmony with every fact and every true theory of existence.

"There is not one single cosmic atom in the universe which interferes with the statement that 'a straight line is the shortest distance between two points.'

"If it can be found that one of the least factors of existence shows violence to any theory, that theory in the nature of things must be false.

"A theory to be true must be based upon facts admitted and self-evident, and the theory must be the product of synthetic evolution from those facts.

"For any statement to be absolutely true, it must be found that no fact in the whole universe impinges upon that statement.

"The assertion of Colonel Ingersoll that 'there can be no evidence of the existence of an infinite being' is dogmatic, pedantic, and not warranted by the facts of existence.

"One fact, if it be a fact, we have for a starting-point; and, if it be not a fact, it must be a myth, and if a myth, then the whole of existence is a delusion, and man is cheated by himself, deluded by sense, by passion, and by reason.

"In the discussion of any problem, all parties

must be agreed upon fundamental principles. Unless the starting-points are the same, no process of ratiocination can ever bring disputants together.

"All results in mathematics and astronomy are based upon the fact that a straight line is the shortest distance between two points. To deny this fact would make mining, engineering, railroad-ing, navigation, impossible.

"Natural philosophy would build a flying island, and the sciences would seek for a new Laputa, and a world of chance would be substituted for law and order, if it should be held that a curved line is shorter than a straight one ; yet no one can prove it.

"That two and two are equal to four is not susceptible of demonstration, still no one denies it. Now, the fact from which the balance of evidence may be placed against the 'assertion,' is the existence of the human mind."

At this point the lecturer interrupted the old gentleman with the exclamation, "Hold ! you are getting into deep water. We must have an understanding. What is the mind ? Philosophy is not settled on this point. Is it a force or a mode of motion ? A phenomenon dependent upon the movement of molecules, or is it the result of isomeric and metameric chemical changes in the brain ?"

"The mind is immaterial," said the old man.  
"The metameric and isomeric changes in chemical



combinations deal with matter alone, and cannot be brought up as examples to illustrate combinations of material and immaterial phenomena.

"Any theory as to the movement of molecules setting up phenomena *de novo* is gratuitous, and must be assigned to the regions of dogmatism.

"We will not put it in a crucible and endeavor to reduce it to its component parts, neither will we call it a force or a mode of motion; but we insist that it is an entity in contradistinction to a non-entity—something instead of nothing.

"If you try to think of nothing, you can only do so by trying to associate in your mind the absence of existence. But, if you think of the mental state of one of your intimate friends, that condition of vacuity or non-entity is not presented to your mind as is the case when you try to think of nothing. This makes it self-evident that the mind does exist, and that it is something."

The lecturer thought for a moment, and then said: "If the mind really be an entity, something instead of nothing, it must be the effect of one or more causes."

"That is just what we will come to after a while," said the old man; "but we must establish its relation to the body before we can proceed to investigate its causes."

## CHAPTER X.

### MIND AND BRAIN.

CONTINUING the conversation, the ancient "tar heel" expressed the opinion that all intelligent persons were agreed that the brain is that particular portion of the animal body with which the mind is immediately connected.

"I agree with you in this opinion," replied his companion; "but in what manner it is related to the brain has never yet been determined."

"Scientific investigation," said Van Winkle, "is of necessity pure materialism, and is compelled to stop at the borders of the spirit-world. In this problem, we have matter and spirit, or material and immaterial powers, so intimately related and associated, that science is not only unwilling but unable to venture a solution."

"Would it not more properly come within the province of the psychologist?"

"No. Theology and psychology both have hammered at this solution ever since man began to think on the subject, and with a bitterness and rancor more suited to the Furies."

"Is there then no explanation to phenomena which are under the daily observation of all men?"

"An explanation that would be satisfactory to all minds is perhaps an impossible thing, but the balance of evidence may be placed here, as in other intricate cases, by reasoning from such facts as are known."

"I can't understand," replied the stout gentleman, "how it is possible for much evidence to be adduced from such a paucity of facts."

"It is true the facts are not many, but, by a system of exclusion, evidence by denial will aid reason very much in getting a start."

"Would you exclude all the present theories on the subject?"

"I would first analyze those theories and see if they are founded on facts."

"The theologic idea seems to be that the mind exists independently of the brain, and only uses the brain as an implement or tool."

"That is about their position," observed the old man, "and some pseudo-materialists maintain the same views, and among the most noted was the late Dr. John W. Draper."

"He attempts to argue from the construction of the brain and nervous mechanism the necessity for an independent vital principle or soul, and says: 'Thus it may be proved that those actions

which we term intellectual do not spring from mere matter alone, nor are they functions of mere material combinations ; for, though it is indisputably true that the mind seems to grow with the bodily structure, and declines with it, exhibiting the full perfection of its powers at the period of bodily maturity, it may be demonstrated that all this arises from the increase, perfection, and diminution of the instrument through which it is working. An accomplished artisan cannot display his powers through an imperfect tool, nor, if the tool should be broken or become useless through impairment, is it any proof that the artisan has ceased to exist ; and so, though we admit that there is a correspondence between the development of the mind and the growth of the body, we deny that it follows from that either that the mind did not pre-exist or that the death of the body implies its annihilation.' ”

The lecturer himself could see that there was some “lost motion ” in this theory, and observed : “This reasoning, carried out to its legitimate conclusion, would make the minds of all men equal—even that of the man-eating savage or the idiotic cretin would compare favorably with the greatest benefactors of the race. The Australian on his log and Sir Isaac Newton, disembodied and deprived of the imperfect tools of the present life, would become co-artisans of equal merit in

that land where there are no tools to work with, and no work to do."

Rip Van Winkle agreed with him in this criticism, and proceeded to give the materialistic view, or such deductions as science is able to present, by quoting from Dr. Austin Flint's work on "Human Physiology."

" 'At the present day, we are in possession of a sufficient number of positive facts to render it certain that there is and can be no intelligence without brain-substance; that, when brain-substance exists in a normal condition, intellectual phenomena are manifested with a vigor proportionate to the amount of matter existing; that destruction of brain-substance produces loss of intellectual power; and, finally, that exercise of the intellectual faculties involves a physiological destruction of nervous substance, necessitating regeneration by nutrition here as in other tissues in the living organism. The brain is not, strictly speaking, the organ of the mind, for this statement would imply that the mind exists as a force independently of the brain; but the mind is produced by the brain-substance; and intellectual force, if we may term the intellect a force, can be produced only by the transmutation of a certain quantity of matter.' "

The stout gentleman was pleased with the mention of Dr. Flint, and said that he knew Flint in his lifetime, and a very able man he was. "But,"



he continued, "if Dr. Flint has stated facts, and his conclusion be true that 'mind is produced by the brain-substance,' then the brain becomes a functioning organ, and may be compared to other organs in the animal body, whose functions are well established. Bile, tears, saliva, and urine are secretions from and by their respective organs, the liver, the lachrymal and salivary glands, and the kidneys; so, if mind is only a secretion or excretion from the brain, this theory stands on as poor ground as the preachers' theory, and the exclamation of Pope Leo the Tenth, when he dismissed his prelates from their discussion of the soul, *Et redit in nihilum, quod fuit ante nihil*,\* is applicable to both, and the 'assertion' of Colonel Ingersoll remains unchallenged and unrefuted."

Our old philosopher expected this sophism, and challenged his opponent in these words:

"All these secretory and excretory organs have blood as a material from which, by their own action, the various secretions and excretions are formed. These secretions are material substances, and may be reduced to about the same elements as the blood from which they are formed.

"You may ask if the brain has not blood also.

"I would answer yes, and a very abundant supply, but it is for the nutrition of the brain-

\* It began of nothing, and in nothing it ends.

substance itself, and not for any secretory purposes. The anatomy of the liver shows that it has a double circulation, one for the renewal of liver-substance and the other for the purpose of fabricating bile; and so with all the other secretory organs of the body. The spleen is the only organ of any consequence except the brain which has but one circulation, and, as there is no visible effect of splenic action, its function to this day is problematical.

“The mind being the product of brain-action, the question arises, ‘By what manner of means is this product the result of brain-action?’

“Bile, the product of liver-action, is a material substance made of blood, another material substance. Mind, the product of brain-action, is immaterial, and made from—what?

“That like begets like is a law of nature.

“Two of a sort will beget the same sort.

“What does the brain make the mind out of? Nothing? The idea of creating something out of nothing has never been allowed to any power save Deity. Does it make it out of itself? The brain is material substance, and to admit an immaterial effect from a material cause would belie the law that like produces like.”

The reader will perceive now that every theory and every chemical or molecular change that may occur in the brain have been examined and laid



aside, and that the present tack is the only one that holds out the least hope of a rational solution of the problem.

The subject will be further elucidated in the next chapter by an elaborate argument from analogy.

## CHAPTER XI.

### ELECTRICITY.

RIP VAN WINKLE, continuing his discourse, brought up, as an analogous example to the mind and brain, one of the most interesting subjects of which natural philosophy treats, and addressing his companion with an earnestness unusual to an octogenarian said: "Electricity is undoubtedly a force in nature, yet we never see manifestations of it except when controlled by or controlling matter; and electrical force, like intellectual force, can be produced only by the transmutation of a certain quantity of matter.

"It is as immaterial as mind itself, and bears the same relation to matter that mind does to brain-substance.

"It is true that very dissimilar combinations of matter can be made to develop the phenomena of electricity, while brain-substance alone is able to develop mind; still, this can be no argument against the analogous relations of the two when we take into consideration that one is an organized and the other an unorganized force.

"We might ask the same questions about elec-

tricity and its connection with matter that we asked about mind and its connection with brain-substance, and the same answers would be applicable to both.

"That electricity occupies space between material bodies is not disputed, and, moreover, it may be concentrated and stored up by machines and used at will, or it may be transferred from one body into another and held, or it may be allowed to dissipate itself again into space.

"Matter then is one thing, and electricity is another thing.

"Brain-substance is one thing and mind is another thing.

"Electrical machines, by the transmutation of a certain quantity of matter, make manifest electricity which exists independently of the electrical machines.

"Brain-substance, by the transmutation of a certain quantity of matter, makes manifest mind which exists independently of brain-substance."

At this point the lecturer interrupted the old man by saying, "The course of reasoning you have adopted by your system of exclusion, and your appeals to exceptions or denials, would leave no other conclusion possible except the one you have arrived at; but you are still in a dilemma as to the priority of matter or electricity, and of brain-substance or mind."

"I understood," replied Van Winkle, "that we had decided that mind in its individuality or personality is secondary to brain-substance; as the argument advanced by Dr. Draper to the contrary led to so many absurdities that you yourself first pointed them out. But, as that was more of a speculation than a rational conclusion, I will endeavor to show why the individual mind is secondary to brain-substance, and why brain-substance is secondary to mind as a whole."

"I am a good listener," observed his companion, "and have good ears—proceed."

"In the first place," continued Rip, "the facts stated by Dr. Flint make it positively certain that there can be no (individual) mind without brain-substance."

The lecturer answered this by quoting Dr. Draper's illustration of the artisan and tool.

"'An accomplished artisan cannot display his powers through an imperfect tool, nor, if the tool should be broken or become useless through impairment, is it any proof that the artisan has ceased to exist; and so, though we admit that there is a correspondence between the development of the mind and the growth of the body, we deny that it follows from that either that the mind did not pre-exist or that the death of the body implies its annihilation.'"

"Dr. Draper has a very nice way of putting

things," replied Rip; "but if each individual mind pre-existed each individual brain, then each individual mind must either have existed from all eternity or have come into existence at some indefinite time prior to each individual brain, and in either case the conclusion would be an absurdity."

"Why an absurdity?" asked his companion.

"Because, if the mind existed from all eternity it would be self-existent, and in consequence be subject to no law. It would be conditionless, which we know to be untrue, as every mind is subject to the law of its own surroundings and conditions. If it is made by some power other than itself, and made to be the owner and user of each individual brain, and made prior to that brain, then we have a mind-maker, and that mind-maker either makes mind out of something or creates it out of nothing; and to admit the power to create at all is to admit a creator, and that would end this investigation.

"The individual mind, then, is secondary to the individual brain; but that brain is secondary to collective mind, or mind as a whole, is proved by the fact that, for an individual mind to be secondary to any individual brain, that individual brain must stand in the relation of cause and effect to its individual mind; and, as brain-substance cannot create or make mind out of nothing, it must have mind as a whole, or collective mind, as a source of



supply upon which it can draw, in order to make manifest any individual mind. The electrical machine has electricity as a whole to draw upon before it can collect and store up any individual charge of electricity."

"You speak of collective mind, or mind as a whole," observed the stout gentleman. "Do I understand you to mean that this collective mind pervades all space, is universal—everywhere?"

"I mean this," said the old teacher, "that mind outside of brain is like time outside of the present moment, like space outside of your own surroundings—limitless.

"If mind had not existed before brain, brain never could have made it manifest unless we allow to brain a creative power. If mind did exist before brain, then to say when it began to exist, is equivalent to saying when time began to exist. If mind does or ever did exist outside of brain, then it is not circumscribed—it is infinite."

"Even if we grant your position of a universal mind," replied the lecturer, "infinity of mind does not necessarily imply the existence of an infinite being. It may be that this universal mind is latent, and shows no activity until concentrated and individualized by the action of brain-substance."

"We know," said the old man, "that electricity is active before it is concentrated by the electrical

machine, and if mind pervades the universe outside of brain, and is only active when concentrated, stored up, and made manifest by brain, if all space between material bodies be filled up with inactive mind, and is only drawn upon by the poor little brains of fishes and birds and animals and man, of insects, and the mites of the microscopic world, then we must say that the supply is out of all proportion to the demand; but if this omnipresent mind thinks, and the evidence that it does is so great that we cannot doubt it, then we have an infinite intelligence, to say the least of it, and an infinite intelligence without the existence of 'being' is scarcely conceivable."

"Your argument is ingenious," answered the stout gentleman, "but it is not sufficient to nullify the assertion of Colonel Ingersoll. The tack may be in the right direction, but the wind is not strong enough to fill the sails."

"Perhaps," replied the old man, "we may be able to find some additional negations, in the doctrine of dysteleology, or purposelessness in nature, which, added to this ingenious tack, may fill the sails enough to keep the ship moving."



## CHAPTER XII.

### DESIGN.

RIP VAN WINKLE continued the conversation thus :

“The argument of design has suffered more at the hands of its friends than of its enemies. The former have made it a mass of contradictions by denying much of its essence, while the latter simply ignore it.

“They have likewise made Jehovah the butt of ridicule by denying him many of his attributes, and investing him with too much of human virtue. He has become a crowned demi-god upon the altars of superstition and fear, and no God to the intellect of man.

“What we are seeking here is an unknown quantity. If we find that quantity to contain mercy, all right. If we find it sodden with envy, spite and malice, it matters not. If we find in it all the elements of human character, shall we be chagrined? Suppose we find the God of the Bible, shall Colonel Ingersoll be unhappy? or, if we find an ‘infinite vacuum,’ shall he rejoice?”

“Colonel Ingersoll would rejoice to find the truth,” observed the stout gentleman.

"Then let's seek the truth with such means as we have," said Van Winkle, and continuing his discourse said: "The doctrine of dysteleology, or purposelessness in nature, offers a wide scope to the discerning powers, and must in a reasonable measure account for facts, or take its place with design as ordinarily presented, and the infinite goodness of Jehovah.

"As we have said before, one fact impinging upon any theory will undo the theory and make it untenable.

"Haeckel, in his 'Evolution of Man,' speaking of the rudimentary organs of animals says: 'They are among the most interesting phenomena with which comparative anatomy acquaints us, because they most forcibly refute the customary teleological philosophy of the schools. They must be regarded as parts which in the course of many generations have gradually been disused and withdrawn from active service. Owing to disuse and consequent loss of function, the organs gradually waste away, and finally entirely disappear. Hence, they are of the greatest philosophical importance; they clearly prove that the mechanical conception of organisms is alone correct.'

"This 'mechanical conception of organisms' makes sexual attraction dependent upon the '*elective affinity of two differing cells,—the sperm-cell and the egg-cell.*'

"The words of Haeckel are these: 'The coalescence of two cells is everywhere the single, original impelling force. At first the two united cells may have been entirely alike. Soon, however, by natural selection, a contrast *must* have arisen between them. One cell became a female egg-cell, the other, a male seed or sperm-cell.'

"Was ever assumption more gratuitous? Did ecclesiastical bigotry ever formulate a more dogmatic conclusion? And yet the mechanical theory of the universe is built upon just such foundations.

"After paying a passionate tribute to love as the 'source of the most splendid creations of art,' and reverencing it as 'the most powerful factor in human civilization,' he says: 'So wonderful is love, and so immeasurably important is its influence on mental life, on the most varied functions of the medullary tube, that in this point more than in any other 'supernatural' causation seems to mock every natural explanation.'

"A theory which is founded only upon a 'must,' ought not to complain of a similar theory, because it sets out with the 'Supernatural,' and seems to mock at the explanations of its degenerate offspring, however much it may claim to be natural."

"I think," replied the lecturer, "that you do Professor Haeckel an injustice by quoting only a part of what he has said on this subject. A read-

ing of his book may place a different construction upon the doctrine of purposelessness *versus* design in nature. Having the book in my traveling bag, with your permission I will read that portion which bears directly upon this theory." And taking from his satchel the first volume of the "Evolution of Man," he read on page 109, from the article "Dysteleology," these words:

"Almost every organism, with the exception of the lowest and most imperfect, and especially every highly developed vegetable or animal body, man as well as others, possesses one or more structures which are useless to its organism, valueless for its life-purposes, worthless for its functions. Thus all of us have in our bodies various muscles which we never use ; for example, the muscles in the external ear and the parts immediately surrounding it. These outer and inner ear muscles are of great use to most mammals, especially such as have the power of erecting the ears, because the form and position of the ear may thus be materially altered, in order to take in the various waves of sound in the best possible manner. In man, however, and in other animals not possessing the power of pricking up the ears, the muscles, though present, are useless. As our ancestors long ago discontinued to make use of them, we have lost the power of moving them. Again, there is in the inner corner of our eye a small

crescent-shaped or semi-lunar fold of skin, the last remnant of a third inner eyelid, the so-called nictitating membrane. In our primitive relatives, the Sharks, and in many other vertebrates, this membrane is highly developed, and of great use to the eye, but with us it is abortive and entirely useless. On the intestinal canal we have an appendage which is not only useless, but may become very injurious, the so-called vermiform appendage of the cæcum. This little appendage of the intestine not infrequently causes fatal disease. If in the process of digestion, by an unlucky accident, a cherry-stone or some other hard body is pressed into its narrow passage, a violent inflammation ensues, which usually causes death. This vermiform appendage is not of the slightest use in our organism; it is the last and dangerous remnant of an organ which was much larger in our vegetarian ancestors, and was of great use to them in digestion, as it is still in many herbivorous animals, such as apes and rodents, in which it is of considerable size and of great physiological importance.

“Other similar rudimentary organs exist in us as in all higher animals, in different parts of the body. They are among the most interesting phenomena with which comparative anatomy acquaints us: firstly, because they afford the most obvious proof of the theory of descent; and sec-



ondly, because they most forcibly refute the customary teleological philosophy of the schools. The doctrine of descent renders the explanation of these remarkable phenomena very simple. They must be regarded as parts which in the course of many generations have gradually been disused and withdrawn from active service. Owing to disuse and consequent loss of function, the organs gradually waste away, and finally entirely disappear. The existence of rudimentary organs admits of no other explanation. Hence they are of the greatest philosophical importance; they clearly prove that the mechanical or monistic conception of the nature of organisms is alone correct, and that the prevailing teleological or dualistic method of accounting for them is entirely false. The very ancient fable of the all-wise plan according to which 'the Creator's hand has ordained all things with wisdom and understanding,' the empty phrase about the purposive 'plan of structure' of organisms, is in this way completely disproved. Stronger arguments can hardly be furnished against the customary teleology or doctrine of design than the fact that all more highly developed organisms possess such rudimentary organs."

"I am glad," replied the ancient school-master, "that you happened to have the book, for the whole extract places the doctrine in a more awk-



ward position than did the few lines I chanced to remember. A doctrine which so easily accounts for these rudimentary organs surely ought to account, with equal facility, for organs and functions which still remain in active use and operation. The human eye, if I remember correctly, occupies ten pages in the 'Evolution of Man.'

"This is the way he commences his description:

"'The history of the development of the eye is equally remarkable and instructive. For although the eye, owing to its exquisite optical arrangement and wonderful structure, is one of the most complex and most nicely adapted organs, yet it develops, without a pre-conceived design, from a very simple rudiment in the outer skin covering.'

"While he can so readily account for 'the last remnant of a third inner eyelid, the so-called nictitating membrane,' he does not once mention a little contrivance in the appendages to the eyeball by which the movement called rotation is effected. We can but admire the silence of Professor Haeckel on one of the most important systems of the animal body in his attempt to prove that man is the blood-relative of apes and worms. In these two exhaustive volumes of over nine hundred pages he devotes ten lines to the development of the muscular system, yet this system gives form and elasticity, beauty and strength to

the body, and is a maze of mechanical principles subservient to beauty and use.

"In the eye socket is a little fusiform muscle, whose use it is to rotate the eyeball, and to do this it must pull the globe in another direction from itself. This is accomplished by the muscle passing over a pulley on the same principle of the block and tackle.

"How did it get over the pulley?"

"Is this fact a result of the terrible and ceaseless 'struggle for existence'?"

"Did this little muscle have such a craving desire for existence, that it projected itself over the pulley, and submitted to be doubled up on itself, for the sake of being there; or did the eye have such a longing for being rolled about, that it built up this muscle, and hung its tendon over the pulley, because there was no other room in the orbit for it? Explain this muscle, and I yield at once to the doctrine of purposelessness."

"Colonel Ingersoll," replied the lecturer, "in his second letter to Dr. Field, answered the argument of design in these words: 'You see what you call evidences of intelligence in the universe, and you draw the conclusion that there must be an infinite intelligence. Your conclusion is far wider than your premise.

"It is illogical to say, because of the existence of this earth, and of what you can see in and

about it, that there must be an infinite intelligence. You do not know that even the creation of this world, and of all planets discovered, required an infinite power or infinite wisdom.

“‘I admit that it is impossible for me to look at a watch and draw the inference that there was no design in its construction, or that it only happened. I could not regard it as a product of some freak of nature, neither could I imagine that its various parts were brought together and set in motion by chance. I am not a believer in chance. But there is a vast difference between what a man has made, and the materials of which he has constructed the things he has made. You find a watch, and you say that it exhibits or shows design. You insist that it is so wonderful it must have had a designer; in other words, that it is too wonderful not to have been constructed. You then find the watchmaker; and you say with regard to him, that he, too, must have had a designer, for he is more wonderful than the watch. In imagination you go from the watchmaker to the being you call God; and you say he designed the watchmaker, but he himself was not designed because he is too wonderful to have been designed. And yet, in the case of the watch and the watchmaker, it was the wonder that suggested design, while in the case of the maker of the watchmaker, the wonder denied a

designer. Do you not see that this argument devours itself?'"

"Colonel Ingersoll was then contending with a preacher," said the old man, "and he was combating an assumption.

"Dr. Field assumed God. In this case, nothing has been assumed; but from one single fact, which you dare not deny, an infinite intelligence has been demonstrated by reasoning which is incontrovertible. If this infinite intelligence is the same which Dr. Field assumed, then instead of Dr. Field's argument devouring itself, your own has become a *felo-de-se*."

## CHAPTER XIII.

### HYBRIDS AND PHYSIOLOGICAL PAIN.

THE old gentleman, continuing his argument, said : " It is a well-known fact that there is a class of animals in the world known as hybrids. These animals are generally produced by the intervention of man ; but we cannot deny that they are a product of nature, and that they may, and do, occasionally come about without any interference on the part of man. Every close observer must have noticed the almost insatiable erotism of these animals. The genital organs in both sexes are perfect with one exception—that of function—they are barren.\* The common mule is a type of this class, and is bred for man's benefit alone. It is one of the most erotic of animals. The male is without sperm-cells, the female has no egg-cells. The true function of the genital organs has never been exercised. The secondary function, that of copulation, has been exercised so rarely that it amounts to ' disuse,' yet these organs have neither become atrophied nor rudimentary."

\* The " Mechanical Conception of Organisms " makes sexual attraction dependent upon the " elective affinity of two differing cells, the sperm-cell and the egg-cell."



"It seems to me," replied the stout gentleman, "that it is straining a point to bring hybrids into the controversy. These animals are an exception to the general rule.

"For their production it requires an amalgamation of two distinct species, and if reproduction was possible to this class, the result could not be a hybrid, but another distinct species.

"'Disuse' can have nothing to do with any of the organs in the hybrid body, as each individual of this class stands in the same cognate position with the first as with the last that might come upon the earth.

"Evolution is at a stand-still with regard to hybrids. They are an exception to the law."

"I am glad to see," remarked the old gentleman, "that your eyes are beginning to open. There is more, I dare say, on this line, than you have thought of.

"Another fact connected with the animal body is worthy of study,—the pains of parturition. For all other pains to which the animal economy is subject, there is an adequate cause, a justifiable and pathological reason. For this pain science is a sealed book, physiology is dumb, and pathology has no answer. According to all analogy, the parturient uterus ought to contract without pain. The heart, stomach, bladder, and other hollow muscles cause no pain either in distention or con-



traction: then wherefore the womb? If pregnancy be a pathological condition, then law is at fault. If according to nature, wherefore the pain?

"No law can be formulated from one isolated fact, neither can any known law hang the tendon of a muscle over a pulley.

"The barrenness of hybrids is the strongest kind of proof against the transmutation of species, and their salacious propensities in connection with their inability to procreate would place them outside the limits of law."

"If," observed the lecturer, "you place them outside the limits of law, they would become outlaws."

"And truly so," replied Van Winkle. "Nature has outlaws as well as society.

"The budding of fruit-trees is a species of outlawry which nature will not permit for many generations in succession. After a while it becomes impossible to make the bud live. There is not a race of mulattoes on the face of the earth. They will go back, and all be white or all negroes, or all die out. And so with improved stock. They revert to their original place as soon as the hand of man is withdrawn."

"Would you place physiological pain in the same category?" asked the lecturer.

"There is no other place to put it," replied the teacher. "Physiological pain is an anomaly in

nature, still it cannot be called a freak, for a regular recurrence of any fact will destroy the idea of supervenient causes."

"I infer," said the lecturer, "from your mode of reasoning, that you regard physiological pain, hybrids, and the various improvements upon natural products, together with the results of the destructive efforts of man, as being extrinsic to natural processes, and, as such, should be placed outside of natural law."

"You seem to have the idea," said the old man, "but I fear you may draw inferences which would not be justified by the introspection."

"Nature cannot do an unnatural thing, neither can man."

"We speak of man's work as being artificial only as a result which nature would not and could not accomplish without individual intelligences. It cannot be unnatural, because every product of an individual intelligence (such as a shoe or a hat, for instance) is artificial in the sense that, for its accomplishment, the individual intelligence has modified and utilized the means placed at its command by the universal intelligence, and in this sense alone can it be called unnatural. Likewise, pain induced by the throes of a parturient uterus, together with hybrid products, while they are perfectly natural, must be regarded as bearing the same relation to the regular current of natural

events which the artificial products of man sustain to natural law ; and, there being nothing analogous in nature to these special and arbitrary effects, we are obliged to regard them as the *ipse dixit* of that infinite intelligence of which the mind of man is an infinitesimal reflection."

"It appears, then," said the lecturer, "that all your array of logical sequences has only brought you at last to the irrational assumption of the average theologian, and that Dr. Field's Presbyterian God is the unknown quantity which you have sought with so much labor."

"The answer we may find," replied the teacher, "in the solution of any problem does not and cannot depend upon our likes or dislikes. To me individually, it is a matter of perfect indifference whether God, devil, heaven, hell, or immortality be fact or fiction. I would not change it from what it is if I had the power, but, it being a fact that the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles, I am glad to know it : so, if God is, I wish to know it ; if hell be a fact, I wish to know that. I have no feeling in the matter. All I can do is to learn the truth according to the lights before me."

At this speech, the stout gentleman made a spasmodic and involuntary effort to flirt the rudimentary, nictitating membrane of his "primitive ancestors" over the visual organ, as if to remove

a mote or to diagnose the disease nyctalopia, but finding the effort useless, and the *impliciti morbi* more in the brain than in the eye, he gazed earnestly at this dried-up specimen of aged humanity, and asked in tones of astonishment:

"What kind of man are you? I have been endeavoring for two hours to get at what you believe, and I am more at a loss than ever. You commit yourself to nothing. Even the deductions of your own strange mode of reasoning are not affirmed. You start with what you call the fact of the human mind, and reason out in your own way another fact, which you call an infinite intelligence.

"You seem to argue that the intelligence of man is nothing but an accumulation of a bit of this infinite intelligence in the brain of each individual, to perpetrate petty acts for good and evil so long as it is used by or uses the brain with which it is intimately connected.

"This would make a theology with which I am unacquainted."

In reply, Van Winkle said: "When you set out with premises which are true, axiomatic, self-evident, and reason logically, the end of your inquiry is truth. The result should neither be anticipated nor imagined, but accepted when found, whether we like or dislike it. Hating a fact cannot make it false, neither can love for an error make it true.

"A broader view of this infinite intelligence might enable you to understand the apparent contradictions in the Jewish and Christian theologies.

"These apparent discrepancies, garbled by sophism and rhapsody, present to the murky eye of ignorance a tangled skein of mysticism, and enable such men as Mr. Ingersoll to pass the juggler's pieces of their scoffing pyrrhonism as true coin."

"It is with difficulty," said the lecturer, "that I get your ideas from your language. What do you mean by 'a broader view of this infinite intelligence'?"

"The word 'infinite' ought to give you a hint as to what I mean.

"Infinite intelligence implies a knowledge of all ignorance, all error, all mistake. It is not confined to the good, the beautiful, and the true. It takes in the universe, with its pleasures and its pains, its beauties and its deformities.

"As man can impart his knowledge to his fellow-man without diminishing his own, so the infinite intelligence can, without detracting from itself, supply all the brains in the universe. But, as a part can never equal the whole, to say, 'An infinite God has no excuse for leaving his children in doubt and darkness,' is a travesty upon the question, 'Why should the infinite ask anything from the finite?'"\*

\* "Colonel Ingersoll to Mr. Gladstone," page 620.



“Colonel Ingersoll says: ‘The sentence “There is a God” could have been imprinted on every blade of grass, on every leaf, on every star.’\* The same, with equal propriety, might be said of this sentence: ‘The three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles.’

“Does everybody in the world know this mathematical truth?

“Suppose Colonel Ingersoll’s mind was so constructed that it would be impossible for him to comprehend the demonstration of this problem, and then suppose he was to say, ‘In the nature of things there can be no evidence of the truth of the proposition that “the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles:”’ would this have any effect upon the truth of the proposition?

“Infinite intelligence implies more than the words import. To condition in word or thought, in act or attribute, is to detract from infinity: therefore, *being* is as much of a necessary attribute of infinite intelligence as omniscience or omnipresence.

“This conclusion may appear at first sight to be a *non sequitur*; but, reasoning from analogy, we can but place it in the catalogue of syllogisms. Our perceptions only give us ideas of intelligence connected with, or emanating from, human beings; and

\* “Letter to Dr. Field,” page 40.



to conceive of an infinite intelligence without the attribute of being, is as impossible as to conceive of an individual intelligence apart from a human being."

"I would infer," said the lecturer, "from what you have already said, that you do not acknowledge the Presbyterian God of Dr. Field, yet you have worked up in your own mind an infinite being. I am at a loss to understand your conception of this being. Is he the God of the Jew, Christian or Mohammedan? Who is he? What is he? What is his character?"

"My argument," said Van Winkle, "has been, all the way through this discussion, to nullify the 'assertion' of Colonel Ingersoll, that 'there can be no evidence of the existence of an infinite being.' If the evidence adduced is of any value; if I have been able to show that the theory of development which involves the transmutation of species, the doctrine of purposelessness, etc., is based upon assumed postulates; and by pure reason to demonstrate that the human mind would be an impossibility from a physical or mechanical conception of organisms,—then we surely have arrived at God: not the God of the Presbyterians, for I thoroughly agree with Colonel Ingersoll that their description of God more nearly resembles an 'infinite vacuum;' not the God of any church or creed: but the God who says, 'I form the light and create

darkness; I make peace and create evil;’ the God who said to the woman, ‘In sorrow shalt thou bring forth children;’ that God of whom Job said, ‘He breaketh me with a tempest, and multiplieth my wounds without cause;’ the same God who hated Esau and loved Jacob before they were yet born; he who put wool upon the negro’s head, and straight hair upon the white man’s; who gave the mule to man for a beast of burden, and virtually said, ‘So far shalt thou go, and no farther;’ he who hung the tendon of the pathetic muscle over a pulley; who changed the two coalescent primordial cells, one into male and the other into female; the same God who capacitated the soul of Colonel Ingersoll for such emotional states as the following words would imply:

“‘I have sometimes wished that there were words of pure hatred out of which I might construct sentences like snakes; out of which I might construct sentences with mouths fanged, that had forked tongues; out of which I might construct sentences that writhed and hissed: then I could give my opinion of the rebels during the great struggle for the preservation of this nation.’”\*

“The same God whom Colonel Ingersoll so cordially hates, and whose existence is affected by this hatred about as much as the existence of rheumatism is affected by his hatred for that.”

\* Speeches, Wit, Wisdom, and Eloquence.

## PART II.

“HE IS UNCOMMONLY POWERFUL IN HIS OWN LINE, BUT IT IS NOT THE LINE OF A FIRST-RATE MAN.”

IN all the catalogue of human frailties, no trait is more censurable, more justly deserving of pity and contempt, than the overweening egotism of oracular wisdom.

Poet and philosopher have combined with ridicule and blame, to expunge this nauseous diletantism from the list of human foibles. Pharisaical notions of superior wisdom and superior virtue have met with rebuff at the high court of the divine intelligence.

Nothing but the most brazen impudence, or the petrified feeling of utter indifference, or the unhallowed desire for notoriety mingled with criminal ignorance, can induce any one to pander to the baser passions of mankind by an attempt to subvert all truth, and to mock at the sacred beliefs of man.

The rottenness of priest-craft has no more to do with religious truth than political jobbery has to do with state-craft. Many a foul stream flows

from a crystal fountain, and to condemn the source on account of the mingling of sewage and garbage is to condemn the sunshine because it falls upon a dung-heap.

The scientific artisan builds a burglar-proof safe. The educated burglar devises means to get into it. Knowledge is the hand-maid of the bad as well as of the good. The oxyhydrogen blow-pipe in the hands of a thief will silently burn a hole through steel as surely as it will do the same work for the chemist. Dynamite will exert the same force for the criminal that it does for the engineer or the miner.

As the criminal studies science, so the sophist studies art.

Ornate and striking sentences, well-rounded periods, poetical effusions, and oratorical grandiloquence capture the senses and inflame the passions.

Logic is prosaic and dull; rhetoric is drunk in with avidity while it moves to tears or excites to madness.

The picture of a dying Saviour has carried more penitents to the mourner's bench than all the books on polemical divinity.

The slave-mother deprived of her babe has stirred up the bitterest feelings in Colonel Ingersoll's soul and caused him to rail at Jehovah.

He has a contempt for the Christian penitent, while the slave-master has a contempt for him.

Is reason the arbiter in either case, or does Colonel Ingersoll possess all and the other two none?

Is truth a reality, or is it a weather-cock to be bandied about by the opinions of men?

Theologians and lay-Christians have fought infidelity with the Bible. It is like fighting the devil with snow-balls. Satan pretends to be a great reasoner, a profound logician. Daniel De Foe, in writing his history, proved him to be a fool. He is the same fool to-day that he has ever been. He is more ignorant than criminal. His theories are confuted by well-known facts. His sayings, tested by logic, are as "sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal."

Before the end of the discussion in the last chapter, the train had stopped at a supply station, and in the very midst of the controversy several gentlemen entered the car, and, observing the animated debate going on between the two passengers, naturally seated themselves in close proximity to the disputants. Some of these gentlemen knew the younger man, and had heard him lecture on his favorite subject. They were familiar also with the writings of Colonel Ingersoll, and observing the attitude of profound earnestness with which the octogenarian deported himself, together with his shriveled and almost insignificant appearance, they soon became an audience of eager listeners, while the old teacher, animated still more



by their attention, seemed to forget that he was a long way from home, that he was traveling at the rate of forty miles an hour over a country he had never seen before, and that he was talking before strangers to whom he was utterly unknown, and whom he would likely never see again.

He seemed to feel that he was in his native pine forest in the sand-hills of Carolina, seated behind his desk in the little log cabin where he had taught class after class for the past half-century, and that he was addressing a score or more of brawny young brains on the principles of logic.

His favorite mode of teaching for many years had been by didactic lectures, and his pupils were made up from the better class of thinkers, many of whom had been to college.

As age encroached upon his manhood, and diminished his powers of bodily endurance, he had given up much of the drudgery of the school-room, and instead of text-book recitations he taught principles by analyzing the current thought of the day, thus presenting information in its most attractive form.

After this manner he proceeded to analyze the philosophy, or, as he called it, the sophistry, of Colonel Ingersoll, and addressing himself to the new additions, as well as to his first companion, he said: "In his first reply to Dr. Field, the colonel says, 'Reason is the supreme and final



test. If God has made a revelation to man, it must have been addressed to his reason. There is no other faculty that could even decipher the address. Extinguish that and naught remains.'

"Here we can cordially shake hands with the great iconoclast, yet I know of no one who makes more pathetic appeals to the feelings and passions.

"With his thunder and invective, what a famous preacher he would have made!

"He seems to think that Dr. Field was trying to cozen him with the 'fatherly' advice to soften his colors. Dr. Field was only telling him the truth when he told him that his words would be more weighty if not so strong.

"Voltaire, Rousseau, Paine, and Hume wrote with persuasive pens. Gregg wetted the pages of his 'Creed of Christendom' with bitter tears, and the passionless and soulless philosophy of materialism never deals in invective.

"The continuous diatribes, flowing like a stream of mephitic vapor from the mouth and pen of this modern apostle of rationalism, hover over the thoughtless multitude, and sway them to and fro with their Jack-o'-lantern lights, causing hurrahs for the moment, and departing like the specter of the Brocken without leaving a visible track.

"Sam Jones, or any other popular revivalist, with a similar use of language, and the same per-

sonal magnetism, can at any moment turn the same tide in his direction with a wave of his wand.

“It is the forte of the revivalist to coax the language for a picture; a horrid and gloomy portrait of hell—a weapon with which he wounds the softest chords of the mother’s heart, and rends the tenderest sympathies of innocent childhood. He succeeds in making miserable for a short time his wife and his baby, his mother and his sister, and thinks he has done God’s service. He talks about the soul as though he had a sample in his pocket, and its destiny as if power had been delegated to him for its disposal. Should the philosopher imitate the priest?

“And more, Colonel Ingersoll ought to remember this scientific fact—that *nothing is lost*—that the ‘correlation and conservation’ of energy is an admitted truth, that force is indestructible and eternal.

“He might also study with advantage the teachings of dynamical physiology, and learn that within the brain there is a registering ganglion which infallibly records every imprint received through the senses.

“Whether we regard the brain as the instrument of the mind, or the mind as the product of brain action, the case is the same. How bad then it is to have error stamped upon a scroll that is

incapable of being filled—a scroll that forever retains the imprints it receives!

“This registering power of mind keeps an accurate account of all our thoughts, and while very few of them are remembered, the whole scroll is so carefully preserved that it may not inaptly be compared to a book.

“‘And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened, and another book was opened, which is the book of life, and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.’

“What a theme for the teachers of revelation if they would give their lessons from a scientific stand-point, instead of the hideous object-lessons portrayed in Dante’s ‘Inferno’ and some modern illustrated Bibles.

“With these facts before him, can Colonel Ingersoll exclaim with Rousseau: ‘When the last trumpet shall sound, I will present myself before the sovereign judge with this book in my hand, and loudly proclaim, thus have I acted; these were my thoughts; such was I’? \*

“A worshiper of the goddess of Reason should be consistent at any rate, for when inconsistency walks in, reason leaves the house without an adieu.

“As ‘the tree is known by his fruit,’ so the

\* “Confessions.”

philosopher is judged by his maxims. Euclid lived in the fifth century B.C. His axioms have stood the test of criticism more than two thousand years. The mathematical sciences have been built upon his sayings.

“‘If a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand.’ Colonel Ingersoll has built a huge structure which he has decorated with ornamental scrolls, and painted with all the colors of the rainbow. It glitters in the moonlight. Beautiful coruscations flash like the wintry aurora around its dome. Upon the highest pinnacle he has placed a statue of Minerva. At the gilded portals may be read in shining letters, ‘*Templum Sapientiæ*.’ In mocking silence the statue echoes back, ‘*Satis eloquentiæ, sapientiæ parvum*.’

“Minerva is impatient upon her throne, and desires to abdicate. The house is divided against itself. The foundation is sand, and the cornerstone, what? The axioms of Colonel Ingersoll.

“Axiom first. ‘That which happens must happen.’ Axiom second. ‘That which must be has the right to be.’

“The colonel is to be admired for his short, crisp way of saying things. It leaves no room for misunderstandings. He is to be admired for the advice he gave to Dr. Field when he said,\* ‘Do

\* “A Reply to the Rev. Henry M. Field,” pages 484-5.

not, I pray you, deal in splendid generalities. Be explicit.' He is to be admired the more for following his own advice—for being explicit. A syllogism is the most beautiful thing ever presented to a reasoning mind.

" 'That which happens must happen.'

"The thumb-screw happened, therefore the thumb-screw must have happened.

" 'That which must be has the right to be.'

"The thumb-screw must have been, therefore it had the right to be.

"Is Colonel Ingersoll fighting for the right?

" 'That which happens must happen.'

"Negro slavery happened, therefore negro slavery must have happened.

" 'That which must be has the right to be.'

"Negro slavery must have been, therefore negro slavery had the right to be.

"Why did Colonel Ingersoll fight against negro slavery?

" 'That which happens must happen.'

"It happened that Guiteau killed Garfield, therefore the killing of Garfield must have happened.

" 'That which must be has the right to be.'

"The killing of Garfield must have been, therefore it was right for him to be killed.

"Did the United States government think so?

"Axiom third.\* 'To exercise a right yourself

\* "A Reply to the Rev. Henry M. Field," page 477.



which you deny to me is simply the act of a tyrant.'

"Is the United States government a tyrant? In killing Guiteau, did it not exercise a right which it denied to him? What would syllogistic reasoning do with the third axiom in this case? Is it possible that this champion of liberty and freedom should uphold the act of a tyrant?

"He boldly says, that \* 'society has the right to protect itself by imprisoning those who prey upon its interests,' and 'it may have the right to destroy the life of one dangerous to the community.'

"How did it come by such rights? By the consent of all its citizens? Nay, my good friends, the right to take life is the right of might.

"Why should Colonel Ingersoll love human law and hate God's law? They both kill, they both oppress; they are both formulated upon the one principle—power. Is he consistent? Is he logical, or is he like 'Frankenstein'?

"Has he taken a peep into the mirror of his own soul, recoiled in horror, and taken vengeance against his Maker?

"Did he include himself in this sentence? † 'Most men are provincial, narrow, one sided, only partially developed.' Is the 'little clearing'

\* "Letter to Dr. Field," page 44.

† "Letter to Dr. Field," page 46.



around his brain just large enough to practice law in, and the remainder of the farm a forest of snakes and wild beasts? Do the poisonous serpents of hatred lie coiled in the brambles, and chant a chorus of hisses with the wild beasts of sophistry?

“In all candor now, which causes his following, his logic or his rhetoric?

“Axiom fourth.\* ‘Neither in the interest of truth, nor for the benefit of man, is it necessary to assert what we do not know.’

“How about axiom second? Does he know it was right for the thumb-screw to be? Does he know it was right for Guiteau to kill Garfield? Does he not see that reason, wherever it sits ‘crowned monarch’ of his brain, will compel that man to place the mistakes, the errors, the world of tears and regrets in which poor, frail humanity is engulfed on the side of right? Does he not see that he has done away with all wrong—that he has made a millennium on earth, or is he in accord with this philosopher?

Whatever is, is right, says Pope—

So said a sturdy thief ;

But when his fate required a rope,

He varied his belief.

“What ! will not now your rule hold good ?”

The executioner cried :

“Good rules,” he said, “are understood

By being well applied.”

\* “Letter to Dr. Field,” page 46.

“I would like to know if Colonel Ingersoll considers himself a civilized man. Does reason sit crowned monarch of his brain? Are his passions his servants? Is he very certain that Jehovah is a myth? Is he positive that axiom second is a truth? Finally, and lastly (as the old-time preacher would say), why is it that he hates the God of Moses with such malignant hatred? Why is it that he expresses regret at the poverty of language—at its paucity of oburgatory expressions, of its deficiency in vocabulary to furnish words to express his loathing of this ‘monster’—this ‘Almighty Friend’ of Dr. Field?

“Would not the old Hindoo prayer, with one word added, be a suitable prayer for many of us?

“‘Have mercy, God, upon’ (me) ‘the vicious; thou hast already had mercy upon the just by making them just.’

“Crimination and re-crimination in any discussion are always offensive to polite ears, but the doctrine of non-resistance, in the history of its evolution, and its struggle for existence, has never yet reached the highest pinnacle either of man’s heart or head; so, to elucidate facts, strong language is at times indispensable.

“Is not the fact of Colonel Ingersoll’s denying God, positive evidence that he has laid aside his reason? Are not these words, taken from his reply to Mr. Black, negative evidence of the same thing?

“ ‘Never for an instant did I suppose that any respectable American citizen could be found willing at this day to defend the institution of slavery.’

“Take axioms first and second in connection with this slavery question, and by syllogistic reasoning see if Isaac Taylor missed it much when he said:

“ ‘The infatuations of the sensual and frivolous part of mankind are amazing; but the infatuations of the learned and sophistical are incomparably more so.’

“If slavery existed by a law of necessity, and Colonel Ingersoll opposed it, and still denounces it as a crime, whether it exists in ‘world, star, heaven or hell;’ and by his own testimony it can be proved by the best and most accurate mode of reasoning known to man—by reasoning that is equivalent to a mathematical demonstration—*that it had the right to be*; then, I say, Colonel Ingersoll ought to recant, and ask pardon of his fellow-men for practicing this unwarrantable imposition upon them for so many years.

“If he is an honest man, he will do it.

“These are his own words: ‘That which happens must happen.’ ‘That which must be has the right to be.’ These sentences are disconnected from all others. They may be found in the November number of this *Review* [holding up the book],—one on page 499, third and

fourth lines from the bottom, and the other on page 476, second line from the bottom.

"They admit of no interpretation. They mean just what they say. They are aphorisms which he has set up for the guidance of mankind. They include every event, every occurrence, every incident, every phenomenon, which have taken place since the world began; and, what is worse, they make right of it all. They do away with all wrong. They abolish evil, and make God a liar. They stultify the human intellect, and make the thumb-screw one of the main-springs of equity. They place human slavery and human freedom in the scales of justice and make the beam poise. They make Anubis a justified god in the Temple of Isis, and the debauchment of the chaste Paulina a virtue. They make wars, pestilence, famine, widows and orphans, beggary, and 'man's inhumanity to man,' 'glad tidings of great joy.'

"They make a boomerang of these words.

"'Slavery includes all other crimes. It is the joint product of the kidnapper, pirate, thief, murderer, and hypocrite. It degrades labor, and corrupts leisure. To lacerate the naked back, to sell wives, to steal babes, to breed bloodhounds, to debauch your own soul—this is slavery. This is what Jehovah "authorized in Judea." This is what Mr. Black believes in still.' \* And, *mirabile dictu*,

\* "Reply to Mr. Black," page 435.



this is what Colonel Ingersoll says *had a right to be*. O! Consistency, thou art indeed a jewel, but imbedded still in the head of a toad.

“Suppose that Colonel Ingersoll should say, ‘A straight line is not the shortest distance between two points—a crooked line or a curved one is shorter than a straight line;’ and suppose he should then call to his assistance all the adjectives in the English language, and import all the slang phrases and objurgations of all the savage dialects on the globe, and hurl them against the originators of the mathematical sciences; and then suppose that he should go over to the great fish market of London, and gather up all the billingsgate of that Alsatian den, and electroplate and gild it, and sugar-coat it, and try to force it down the throats of the American people—do you suppose they would swallow it? And do you suppose that his frantic appeals would disturb the equipoise of the great principles of mathematics?

“With modest diffidence we would suggest that he study the principles of logic more, and Roget’s Thesaurus less.

“Axiom fifth. ‘Everything is right that tends to the happiness of mankind, and everything is wrong that increases the sum of human misery.’\* ”

“The colonel answers questions readily that the

\* “Reply to Mr. Black,” page 505.

wisest and best have hesitated over. Pilate on one occasion asked a divine person, 'What is truth?' He received no answer, unless the rebuke of silence was an answer.

"The above answer to the questions, 'What is right, and what is wrong?' would seem plausible, and would raise no objection in the mind of the average man; neither would an affirmative answer to the question, 'Is the Golden Rule perfect?' surprise the majority of people.

"Remember that no assertion can be the whole truth and nothing but the truth, if a single fact in the whole universe impinges upon that assertion. Colonel Ingersoll himself says: 'There is a continual effort in the mind of man to find the harmony that he knows must exist between all known facts.'\* Such a picture as this has been seen in a civilized household in modern times.

"A woman of moderate mental endowments has been joined in the holy bonds of matrimony (one of Colonel Ingersoll's shrines of worship) to a man of a low order of intelligence, much lower than hers; yet he is kind, humane, loving. To the extent of his ability, he provides for his family. He loves his wife and children, and his neighbors say of him, 'He is a clever fellow, but he has very little sense.' His journey through life is beset with difficulties which require brains to combat them.

\* "Divided Household of Faith."



Being deficient in this respect, the difficulties surround and close in upon him. He becomes involved financially, and his children grow up a burden because of their mental insufficiency. His property is under mortgage; but his friends are staunch, and wait patiently, because he is honest, because he is industrious, because he is good. His family is large. His half-witted children are stout and strong. They have good appetites. They work under their father's directions. They labor hard and willingly. They are good beasts of burden. But the result of all their toil, all their sweat, all their pains is insufficient to raise the mortgage, to cancel the debt, to provide for their daily wants. The pinch of poverty is being felt in that family. The father's brow is clouded, and he is beginning to doubt the justice of God. The mother's hands are horny with toil, and her face haggard with anxiety. The children, with one exception, are unable to appreciate the situation. They are becoming dissatisfied and threaten to leave. They can see no good in unremitting and unremunerative labor. Despair is hovering over that household, and but for an episode of previous years would sit down with that family and stay.

"When the mother was younger, and her animal spirits higher, she formed the acquaintance of a man whose intellect was keen, whose eye was

bright, and whose vivacity of manner was captivating. In an evil moment a *liaison* was formed, and her exceptional child came into the world with a keen eye, a bright intellect, and a handsome face.

“ ‘ Nature’s unbounded son, he stands alone,  
His heart unbiased, and his mind his own.  
No sickly fruit of faint compliance he;  
He ! stamped in nature’s mint with ecstasy !  
He lives to build, not boast, a generous race ;  
No tenth transmitter of a foolish face.’ ”

“ This boy takes in the situation. As mind has power over matter, he arranges with his (?) father and his brothers. Success crowns his efforts, and the household is blessed. His mother’s face puts on a smile, and she is the only one in the wide world who knows why.

“ Was her *faux pas* a right action because good resulted from it ?

“ Here is another picture that may be seen constantly on the easel the world over.

“ A young woman of social standing, education, morality, and beauty enters the same holy bonds of wedlock with her equal in all respects. The marriage-bells peal with joy, and many friends smile and congratulate. This occasion is one of pride, and the whole world recognizes it as being legal and correct. The consequence of this faultless step is *extra-uterine conception*. Suffering and death follow.

“‘The sum of human misery’ is increased. What can reason say to axiom fifth?

“‘Neither in the interest of truth, nor for the benefit of man, is it necessary to assert what we do not know.’ \*

“Is Colonel Ingersoll working in the interest of truth? Is he working for the benefit of man? Does he assert *only* what he knows? Are his conclusions logical deductions from his own axioms? Is this the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth? This, ‘that which must be has the right to be.’

“Is it for the benefit of man that he says this: ‘If in this world there is a figure of perfect purity, it is a mother holding in her thrilled and happy arms her child’? † Does he assert *only* what he knows when he says this: ‘An infinite God has no excuse for leaving his children in doubt and darkness’? ‡ In another place, he says: ‘I have had no experience with gods.’

“How can a man say what anybody or anything ought or ought not to do when he has had no experience with the person, thing, or circumstance?

“There is one sentence in Colonel Ingersoll’s reply to Mr. Black, the drollery of which under all circumstances excites my risibles. I can’t look

\* “Letter to Dr. Field,” page 46.

† “Reply to Mr. Black,” page 487.

‡ “Letter to Dr. Field,” page 40.

at that sentence without laughter, and I can't think about it without a smile. It is this:

“‘Will Mr. Black have the kindness to state a few of his objections to the devil?’

“Now, will Colonel Ingersoll have the kindness to state his opinion of the ‘perfect purity’ of the figure of a mother holding in her arms her *illegitimate* child?

“To pervert truth, to sophisticate nature, philosophy, or the understanding, to bend the mighty energies of the human intellect under a load of such ponderous magnitude as the doctrine of absolute atheism, entails a war in which the divine gift of speech is made the battering-ram of justice, and the confusion of sophistical reasoning is employed to entrap innocence and prostitute virtue.

“Colonel Ingersoll must have got a glimpse of his own when he said: ‘I admit that reason is a small and feeble flame, a flickering torch by stumblers carried in the starless night.’\* Or he may be under the influence of that chameleon sprite ‘Superstition,’ as it leads in the van of human darkness, charming the eye with its cymophanous light, and forming a mirage of iridescent halos around the optics of human thought.

“If he will analyze his own sayings in the light of pure reason, if he will place his philosophy in the

\* “Reply to the Rev. Henry M. Field,” page 475.

scales of justice and test its specific gravity with that of the superstition he so mercilessly condemns, he may find that they both tip the beam at zero ; that opiniatry, not reason, is the 'flickering torch by stumblers carried in the starless night.'

"When a system of philosophy is open to so many adverse criticisms ; when the glare of analysis casts a dark shade over statements purporting to be truth ; and when a code of ethics reveals error under the sharp scalpel of reason, may we not doubt the infallibility of a theology based upon denial, and whose only support is ridicule ?

"It has been said that every man makes his own God. Colonel Ingersoll hates Jehovah because Jehovah tolerates slavery.

"Can hatred alter a fact ? He hates the rheumatism, but can he convince the sufferers from that disease, that rheumatism is a myth because he hates it ? Rheumatism can be positively known to the sufferers only. If Colonel Ingersoll never had the rheumatism, how does he know such a disease exists ? Is he not obliged to believe it from the testimony of others ?

"Perhaps he never had the toothache. Can he tell when another man has it ? Or, don't he believe in toothache because he has had no experience with it ? He may say that it stands to reason that a decayed tooth should ache, or that



an inflamed joint should pain. Very well, how about the pains of parturition? He assuredly has had no experience in that line.

“Is pregnancy a disease and parturition a result of violated law? Are the throes of labor sanitary, pleasurable or in any way for the good of the woman? Are they one of the consequences of a bad action? He says, ‘Actions are good or bad according to their consequences.’ If he says there is nothing bad in the pains of parturition, I will confront his testimony by the testimony of every mother in the land. Will he deny the existence of these pains because he has had no experience with them?

“In his reply to Dr. Field, he says, ‘I have had no experience with gods; there can be no evidence to my mind of the existence of such a being.’ Now, as Colonel Ingersoll has had no experience with the pains of child-birth, I would like to know if there can be any evidence to his mind of the existence of such pains, *save the bare statement of the woman.*

“Exclude the ‘dark continent of motive and desire,’ and let the ‘poor sovereign’ of ‘that wondrous world with one inhabitant’ say whether there can be any more evidence to his mind of the existence of these pains than there can be of the existence of an infinite being. We have the bare statement of the woman for the pains, and *nothing else.*

We have the statements of both men and women for the existence of God. The amount of positive evidence is much greater for the existence of God than for the existence of labor pains, and, in addition to the positive, we have both negative and rationalistic evidence.

“The strongest negative evidence for the existence of God, is that no other, nor all other theories will account for the facts of the universe.

“Admitting God will account for everything.

“The rationalistic evidence for the existence of God is the stepping up to him by the ladder of the human mind.

“Now, unless a man is lost in the ‘treacherous sands and dangerous shores’ of this ‘dark continent of motive and desire,’ he must see that it is no harder to believe in God than it is to believe in the rotundity of the earth, or the existence of China.

“‘I have had no experience with gods,’ therefore there is no God.

“Is this syllogistic reasoning? Is Colonel Ingersoll dishonest, or is he unwise? He sets up a great deal of negative evidence to prove that he is not dishonest.

“Error is ever the result of ignorance or dishonesty. It never comes from any other source.

“If he is honest, then the contest is only between ignorance and right. A good part of the better

world says he is not right. According to his own definition of right and wrong, he is either wrong or inconsistent. I think he himself will agree that inconsistency cannot be right. Then if inconsistency cannot be right, the colonel must be wrong. Being wrong and being honest at the same time, he must admit that he is ignorant. Being ignorant, he ought not to set himself up for a teacher. If he persists in teaching, then he must deny that he is wrong or he must deny that he is honest. Being honest, however, there is nothing left but to say he is wrong; and being wrong, he is not fit to teach. Being unfit to teach, he ought to quit. This is a test of his honesty. Will he quit, or will he persist in his error, or will he endeavor to learn the truth?

“He says, \* ‘We should do all within our power to inform, to educate, and to benefit our fellow-men.’ Is he doing it? If so, by what means? Are his axioms a measure of his power? Where does his strength lie?

“Colonel Ingersoll has certainly missed his calling. He ought to have been a preacher. That profession would have enabled him to expound his sophistry, to promulgate his maxims and contradictions to his heart’s content, without offense. And he could in pious humility have prayed with ‘Holy Willie:’

\* “Divided Household of Faith.”

“‘I bless and praise thy matchless might,  
Whan thousands thou hast left in night,  
That I am here afore thy sight  
For gifts and grace,  
A burnin’ and a shinin’ light  
To a’ this place.’

“He reasons after the manner of the revivalist. He occupies a place in the literary and philosophical world similar to Jay Gould’s position in the financial world. He is neither Jew nor Gentile. He is the special phenomenon of the nineteenth century. He has pitted himself single-handed against the statesman, the theologian and the jurist. In many cases he has been the victor. He seeks notoriety as Gould seeks money—it matters little how he gets it.

“He has studied human nature and learned its weaknesses.

“While he holds up reason as the *ultima Thule* of all that is desirable, he tempers his words to the capacity of the average man—well knowing that the mote which blinds his own eye has a magnified image in the eyes of the great majority of his fellows.

“He has learned the unfortunate fact, that it is not so much *what* a man says, but nearly all depends upon *how* he says it.

“Reason, that mighty fetich of his idolatrous homage, is to him and his followers a flamboyant

light, encircled with halos and spectral shadows—delusive in itself, and, siren-like, leading its votaries on to a willing death.

“Mr. Ingersoll should stop and think. The people should stop and think, before they indorse him.

“‘Prove all things; hold fast that which is good,’ but don’t say, ‘Everything is right that tends to the happiness of mankind, and everything is wrong that increases the sum of human misery.’ And don’t say, ‘That which must be has the right to be.’ And don’t say, ‘Ignorance and credulity sustain the relation of cause and effect.’ And don’t say, ‘Acts are good or bad according to their consequences, and not according to the intentions of the actors.’ And above all things, don’t say, ‘In the nature of things there can be no evidence of the existence of an infinite being.’”

The train stopped and the lecturer got up to leave. He was billed to this town for his “celebrated lecture,” and a large concourse of people with a brass band had come to the depot to welcome him.

He had listened with great attention to the long discourse of the old teacher, and many times he had strongly felt the impulse to interrupt, but being a good listener as well as a good talker, he had sat with the others, mute and patient.



His cynical eye beamed with a sardonic twinkle as he reached out his hand to bid the old gentleman good-by, and he could not refrain from asking a few personal questions in regard to the old man's life history.

"My good friend," he said, "I am going to leave you here, and while I have been entertained in a variety of ways with your companionship, I am curious to know if you are a man of family."

"No," answered the old man, "I have never been married."

"Have you made a fortune by your profession of teaching?"

"I have never had time to think about making money."

"Without family, a man of your age must be somewhat alone in the world?"

"A man cannot be very much alone in the world who has friends at home, and books wherever he goes."

"Can friends and books satisfy the cravings of the human heart? Is ambition stayed by a taste of others' glory? Is it nothing to be known—to be heralded on the wings of the wind—to come in contact with the great and the learned?"

"You contend for principles, while the world neither understands nor appreciates you. The majority of men love to be cheated, and will pay handsomely for the service.

"Poverty is the Muses' patrimony.

"Saturn and Mercury, the patrons of learning, are both dry planets.

" 'And to this day is every scholar poor ;  
Gross gold from them runs headlong to the boor.'

"Good-by." And, shaking the old man's hand, he stepped out of the car.

"Do you know that man?" asked a clerical-looking gentleman on the opposite seat.

"No."

"That is Colonel Ingersoll."

THE END.















Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process  
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide  
Treatment Date: Jan. 2005

**Preservation Technologies**

A WORLD LEADER IN PAPER PRESERVATION

111 Thomson Park Drive  
Cranberry Township, PA 16066  
(724) 779-2111



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 013 774 225 1

